



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

Federal Retail Pharmacy Partnership Program for COVID-19 Vaccination FAQs

The Federal Retail Pharmacy Program for COVID-19 Vaccination is a collaboration between the federal government, pharmacy partners, and states and territories to increase access to COVID-19 vaccination across the United States. This partnership involves 21 national pharmacy partners and independent pharmacy networks, representing over 40,000 retail and long-term care pharmacy locations nationwide.

Questions for the general public

How will I know if my local pharmacy is part of the program? And how can I get vaccinated? –

Individuals who are eligible for vaccination in their state and are interested in getting vaccinated at their local pharmacy should call or check the pharmacy's website to find out if vaccine is available. CDC has created a webpage that lists the [pharmacy partners currently participating in the program in your state](#). Some jurisdictions have also launched websites that show where COVID-19 vaccine is available for eligible individuals.

Most pharmacy partners are using online scheduling systems to schedule vaccination visits for eligible individuals based on their limited available vaccine supply.

Which populations are receiving vaccination through this program? –

The eligibility criteria for vaccination is determined by each state and territory. Pharmacy partners will focus on vaccinating individuals who are eligible for vaccination based on these state-selected criteria. These population groups may include healthcare workers, other essential workers, and elderly people. Specific population groups will vary by state or territory.

What kind of screening will pharmacy partners conduct to determine if an individual is eligible to get a vaccination as part of this program? –

Pharmacy partners will screen individuals to determine their vaccination eligibility according to the state or territory's vaccination plan. Individuals may be asked about their age, occupation, or underlying medical conditions. Screening may also include checking for [contraindications – reasons why an individual should not receive the vaccine – to COVID-19 vaccines](#).

Pharmacies **will not** require proof of age, occupation, or any other type of credentials; however, they will rely on self-attestation for validating group membership. This assures that no one will be turned away for lack of specific identification documents (e.g. driver's licenses) and eases the burden on participating pharmacies and individuals.

What will pharmacy partners charge for COVID-19 vaccine? –

COVID-19 vaccine is free of charge for everyone. Participating pharmacies will bill private and public insurance for the vaccine administration fee. For uninsured patients, this fee will be reimbursed through the [Health Resources and Services Administration's Provider Relief Fund](#) [↗](#). No one will receive a bill for a COVID-19 vaccine.

Additional information about the program

How many pharmacies are participating in this program?

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This partnership involves 21 national pharmacy partners and independent pharmacy networks, representing more than 40,000 retail and long-term care pharmacy locations nationwide. **It is important to know that early on, when vaccine supply is still limited, many pharmacies may not have vaccine or may have very limited supply.**

Pharmacy partner enrollment for the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program has closed. Pharmacy partners were enrolled based on their (1) population served and community reach, (2) capability to store vaccines and ensure cold chain management, (3) ability to meet data reporting requirements, and (4) capacity to vaccinate (estimated daily number of doses each facility is able to administer).

This program was not designed to cover every pharmacy in the United States. Chain pharmacies and network administrators not included in the federal program can enroll with states directly to become COVID-19 vaccination providers. Independent pharmacies that wish to participate in the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program may sign up with an existing network administrator partner to provide COVID-19 vaccination as part of the program.

How were the pharmacies that will start as part of program launch selected?

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CDC worked with states and territories to select initial pharmacy partners to start the program in their communities. Jurisdictions made selections based on a number of factors including the number of stores, the ability to reach some of the populations most at risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (those over 65 years of age, socially vulnerable communities), and alignment with their existing vaccination plan. The initial selections are just a starting point, and eventually, pharmacy partners will provide COVID-19 vaccine in every state or territory where they have retail or long-term care pharmacy locations.

How much vaccine will the pharmacies receive as part of this program?

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In the early stages of the program, pharmacies are receiving limited doses of vaccine, around 1 million doses each week, to divide among select retail locations across the country. As vaccine supply increases, more retail locations will be added. CDC has created a webpage that lists the [pharmacy partners currently participating in the program in your state](#). Check your local pharmacy's website to see if they are providing COVID-19 vaccine and if you are eligible to receive it.

When will additional participating pharmacy partners be added in each state or territory?

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As the vaccine supply grows, pharmacy partners will be able to start vaccinating in additional states and territories based on how they can best meet demand. Pharmacy partners will notify CDC of their intent to expand, and CDC will give jurisdictions notice before a new pharmacy partner starts providing COVID-19 vaccine in their jurisdiction.

What will pharmacy partners do with excess vaccine that is nearing its expiration date?

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CDC supports optimizing the use of all COVID-19 vaccine. The [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends](#) expanding vaccine availability to broader population groups when vaccine supply at a certain location is in danger of being unused. Pharmacies should use this guidance when making plans to ensure no dose is wasted.

In addition to the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program highlighted above, CDC is offering the **Pharmacy Transfer Program**. This program allows states and territories to transfer their allocated vaccine doses to federal pharmacy partners to help vaccinate target populations in their communities. As the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program rolls out, jurisdictions may choose to change the number of doses they transfer to pharmacy partners.

Pharmacies not enrolled with CDC as COVID-19 vaccination providers can enroll directly with a state or territory's immunization program to offer vaccination in their communities.